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ABSTRACT

Based on the pattern of "the pitch" (Hi/Trust Me/You Need/Hurry/Buy), this sequence of questions can be used to focus on the "skeleton" underneath the surface variations of radio and television commercials, and newspaper and magazine ads. The five questions, which include evaluation criteria, are as follows: (1) What attention-getting techniques are used? (2) What confidence-building techniques are used? (3) What desire-stimulating techniques are used? (4) Are there urgency-stressing techniques used? and (5) What response-seeking techniques are used? (HTH)

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The 30-Second Spot Quiz

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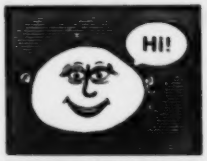
The 30-Second Spot Quiz

Use this 1-2-3-4-5 sequence of questions, based on Hugh Rank's pattern of **"the pitch"** (Hi/Trust Me/You Need/Hurry/Buy), to focus on the *"skeleton"* underneath the *"surface variations"* of radio and TV commercials, newspaper and magazine ads.



1 What ATTENTION-GETTING techniques are used?

Anything unusual? Unexpected? Noticeable? Interesting? Related to:

- ☐ **senses:** motions, colors, lights, sounds, music, visuals (e.g. computer graphics, slow-motion)
- ☐ **emotions:** any associations *(see list below)*: sex, scenery, exciting action, fun, family, pets.
- ☐ **thought:** news, lists, displays, claims, advice, questions, stories, demonstrations, contest.

(Popular TV **programs** *function as* attention-getters *to "deliver the audience" to advertisers.)*

2 What CONFIDENCE-BUILDING techniques are used?

- ☐ Do you *recognize, know* (from earlier repetition) the **brand name? company? symbol? package?**
- ☐ Do you *already know, like,* and *trust* the **"presenters"**: the endorsers, actors, models?
- ☐ Are these "presenters" **AUTHORITY FIGURES** (expert, wise, protective, caring,)? Or, are they **FRIEND FIGURES** (someone you like, like to be, "on your side"; incl. "cute" cartoons)?
- ☐ What key **words** are used? (*Trust, sincere,* etc.) **Nonverbals?** *(smiles, voice tones, sincere look)*
- ☐ In **mail** ads, are computer-written *"personalized"* touches used? On **telephone:** tapes? scripts?

3 What DESIRE-STIMULATING techniques are used? (Main part of ad)

Consider (a) **"target audience"** as (b) **benefit-seeking;** and persuaders benefit-promising strategies as focused on (c) **product claims,** or, (d) **"added values"** associated with an product.

☐ a. **Who is the "target audience"?** Are *you?* (If *not,* as part of an unintended audience, are you *uninterested* or *hostile* toward the ad?)

☐ b. **What's the primary motive of that audience's benefit-seeking?** Use chart at right. Most ads are simple acquisition *(lower left).* Often, such motives co-exist, but one may be dominant. Ads which intensify a **problem,** (that is, a "bad" already hated or feared; *the opposite, or the absence of,* "goods") and then offer the product as a **solution,** are here called **"scare-and-sell"** ads. *(right side).*

To keep a "good" *(protection)*	To get rid of a "bad" *(relief)*
To get a "good" *(acquisition)*	To avoid a "bad" *(prevention)*

☐ c. **What kinds of product claims are emphasized?** *(Use these 12 categories)* What key words,images? Any *measurable* claims? Or are they *subjective opinions, generalized* praise words ("puffery")?

SUPERIORITY *("best")*	BEAUTY *("lovely")*	STABILITY *("classic")*	UTILITY *("practical")*
QUANTITY *("most")*	SCARCITY *("rare")*	RELIABILITY *("solid")*	RAPIDITY *("fast")*
EFFICIENCY*("works")*	NOVELTY *("new")*	SIMPLICITY *("easy")*	SAFETY *("safe")*

☐ d. **Are any "added values" implied or suggested?** Are there words or images which associate the product with some "good" already loved or desired by the intended audience? With such common human needs/wants/desires as in these 24 categories:

"basic" needs:	**"certitude" needs:**	**"territory" needs:**	**"growth" needs:**
FOOD *("tasty)*	RELIGION *("right")*	NEIGHBORHOOD *("hometown")*	ESTEEM *("respected")*
ACTIVITY *("exciting")*	SCIENCE *("research")*	NATION *("country")*	PLAY *("fun")*
SURROUNDINGS *("comfort")*	BEST PEOPLE *("elite")*	NATURE *("earth")*	GENEROSITY *("gift")*
SEX *("alluring")*	MOST PEOPLE *("popular")*	**love & belonging needs:**	CREATIVITY *("creative")*
HEALTH *("healthy")*	AVERAGE PEOPLE *("typical")*	INTIMACY *("lover")*	CURIOUSITY *("discover")*
SECURITY *("protect ')*		FAMILY *("Mom" "kids")*	COMPLETION *("success")*
ECONOMY ("save")		GROUPS *("team")*	

4 Are there URGENCY-STRESSING techniques used? *(Not all ads, but always check.)*

- ☐ If an urgency appeal: What words? *(e.g. Hurry, Rush, Deadline, Sale Ends, Offer Expires, Now.)*
- ☐ If **no** urgency: is this **"soft sell"** part of a *repetitive, long-term ad campaign* for standard item?

5 What RESPONSE-SEEKING techniques are used? (*Persuaders always seek some kind of response!)*

- ☐ *Are there specific triggering* words used? (Buy, Get, Do, Call, Act, Join, Smoke, Drink, Taste, etc.)
- ☐ Is there a **specific response** sought? (Most ads: to buy something)
- ☐ If **not:** is it **conditioning** ("public relations" or "image building") to make us **"feel good"** about the company, to get favorable public opinion on *its* side (against any government regulations, taxes)?

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